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Urban Decline and Revitalization Project in Izmir-Tire Historical City Center

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Abstract

Urban revitalization has emerged as a response to the urban decline problems. Generally, urban revitalization projects are applied on districts that are in a process of decay. Historical city centers are under risk of decay and chaos because of historic layers that are formed in leadership of the user's needs such as contexts like commercial and social. Izmir-Tire Historical City Center has experienced different user profiles and it was formed as a commercial district in history. This paper is to examine Izmir-Tire urban conservation project, which has project that is started in historical urban textures that is diversified in context of scales and urban development dynamics.

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1. Introduction

Modern cities have already serious inner city problems because of urban decline as a consequence of inner-city transformation. To solve these problems, countries have ongoing downtown revitalization efforts in place. Rhodri states that problems of downtown decline should be dealt with across the whole downtown area because they appear not only in commercial and business areas, but also in residential areas as well, with features physically and socio-

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economically (Rhodri, 2012). Today in European countries and in Turkey inner city transformation is seen widespread. In Europe, to reduce the bad impact of inner city transformation various precautions have been taken for 60 years. However, Turkey has considered this issue as important for only 10 years. There is a need for a multi-dimensional approach to the multi-dimensional urban life, in the core of the problem of efficient conservation of the historical textures in our cities. The inter-institutional organizing is one of the most outstanding problems in these factors. Through centuries these historical city centers that are built up in commercial districts, experienced different subjects. Also these aspects are generated the need of an urban revitalization project in those areas. In Turkey; the parts that are responsible by the actors who are involved in the urban conservation projects and the relationships between actors are examined and the question of what kind of role distributions are going to be effective in the urban conservations are researched in the enlightenment of recent legal and communal developments. In this direction; İzmir-Tire urban conservation project, which has started in historical urban textures that are diversified in context of scales and urban development dynamics, are examined as well as the relationship between the actors' roles in the project process, project success of the organization forms and urban dynamics.

For sustaining the productivity in conservation without giving compromises from scientific qualities; the positive relationships that are built by various parties and developing the communication; thus, creating an efficient, effective coordination and a cooperation scheme remain their importance. This point should be, especially, focused on the communication, balance and coordination between local civil communes like 'expert' and 'user', actors that are supervising the project processes in the areas like such as scientific quality and communal participation, investor and authorized rolled municipality and the propulsive actors such as owners that provide the acceleration for the realization of the projects.

The concept of urban transformation, began to emerge in the early nineteenth century when the city's social, cultural and economic needs brought on by physical factors and led the city to change. Urban places resemble living organisms which also become dilapidated because of increasing population in time, natural disasters and bad construction (Şişman and Kibaroglu, 2009). Due to aspects like unhealthiness, environmental pollution, and depression, it starts to become a region faced with social and economic deterioration. In order to show the development of the city, which was re-conversion process of collapse, there have been several different interventions that are up to date. Urban transformation is a general concept of collecting applications for the regeneration of the existing urban structure (Şişman and Kibaroglu, 2009). Urban transformation in the host application occurs in nine different formats.

- Renewal
- Rehabilitation
- Conservation
- **Revitalization**
- Redevelopment
- Improvement
- Clearance
- Infill development
- Refurbishment

While in the past a very important position in terms of historical significance today, the method that we use to restore the years the importance he places on the old back: **Revitalization**. Urban revitalization, in the context of social-cultural, economic or urban parts that live in an urban breakdown process from the physical point of view, is to eliminate factors that cause urban breakdown or method to revive the area again as a result of change.

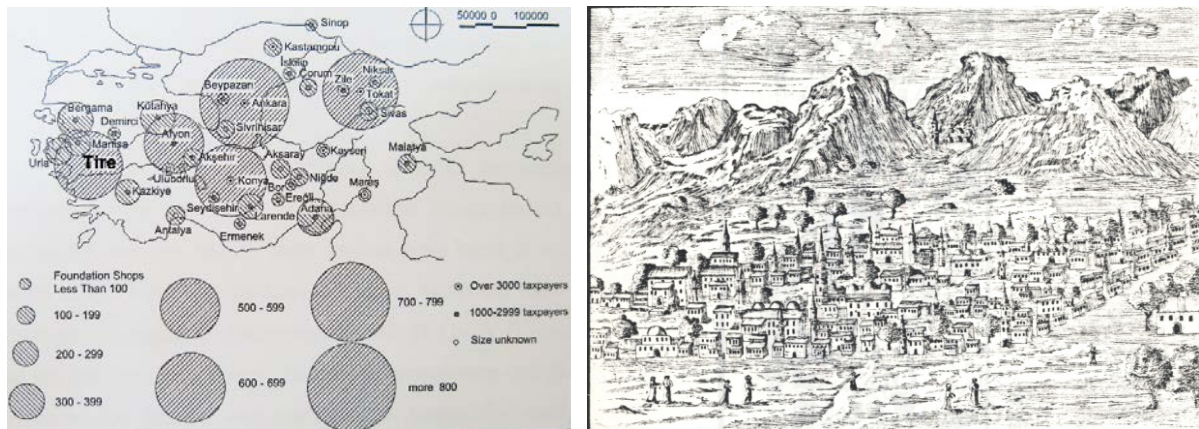
This study; which is going to be a frame that examines all these various factors together, is focused on the organization of the actors which are included in the process of urban conservation. The roles of the actors in the process as one of the main elements that effect the organization process' success, is going to be examined. In process of urban conservation that is known with its complicated qualities constantly; mission, authority, responsibility and sharing functions, relationship with actors are determined. In this shareholding, providing a harmonious balance throughout the entire project by actualizing the appropriate roles due to each actor's specific features and capabilities is a key point in the success of conservation process. While expanding from structural scale to the urban and environmental scale, the complexity of the historical environment's conservation process is increasing. That multi dimensionality shows itself in urban scale completely.

- **Urban Conservation Projects:** Urban conservation processes are dealt with in protection aimed urban design project in the scale of historical urban textures and similarly featured project units. These projects that are named as urban conservation projects are tried to relate within planning and application activities.
- **Actors:** In order to explain the organisation of the actors that enrol in the conservation process, corporate and private parties of these actors are explained. The terms and processes of the parties, belonged sectors, and roles in the project, the positive and negative relationships according to these features, corporation between each other, and the results of the organisation form are examined.

In the scope of the study; historical urban environments in our country, that have varieties in context of urban development dynamics and scales, are evaluated and common principles that have general validity are tried to be attained among these.

2. Reasons for the Conservation of Izmir-Tire Historical City Center

Izmir-Tire is a historical city center that have changed though centuries. The main documents about Tire were found after the Roman Empire. Within the Byzantium Period, the settlement had got a greater importance and these aspects had prepared a foundation for Tire to become a developing city center. During the Ottoman period, two types of towns were emerged and reshaped according to the needs. Consequently the common elements were the mosque, bedesten and imaret. At the outset, the main center of the town, the bedesten was built for the exchange of fabrics, cotton materials, linens etc., later they were transformed into markets for valuable goods such as gold and silver. There were hans which specialized in trade activities and the roads, that specialized in production, commerce and services around the bedesten (Çulcu, 2006).



- The illegal additions and irrelevant top covers of the shops that are harming the historical identity
- The presence of incompatible new/contemporary buildings within the old/historical buildings
- Decreasing of building levels in some areas
- Destructions or becoming ruins of registered historic buildings
- The storey-built car parks that disrupts the integrity of the urban identity
- Occurring of unsafe places in the ruined areas/buildings
- Failed usage of the region by people because of these reasons
- Decreasing popularity and decaying of the region due to people's choice of different shopping areas.

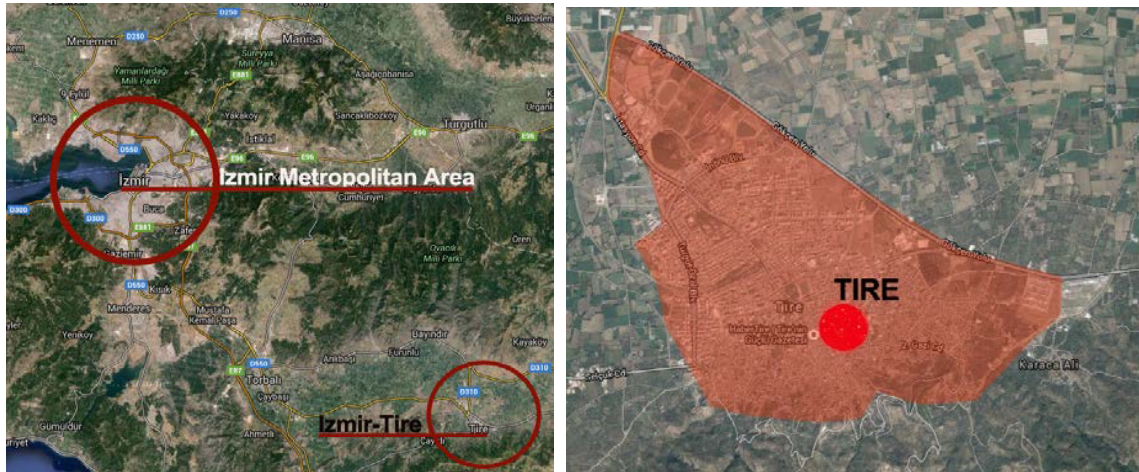


Fig. 2. (a) Location of Tire in Izmir; (b). Location of Izmir-Tire.

With all these reasons, it was believed that there should be a new conservation plan. This new plan was initiated under the name “Tire Conservation Project” with the belief of a healthier application including participant associations. Generally buildings were functioned as trade buildings in the past like as Hans. Nowadays these buildings are dis-functioned and therefore decayed. Generally, they are used as depots or some sitting places and shops for small works. On the other hand there are some buildings that have already been conserved likewise the bath building in the bazaar area in the city center.



Fig. 3. (a) Views from Kutu Han; (b) Restored Tahtakale Bath in Conservation Area in Tire

The Bath was conserved but it did not follow the right path. The fillings between the stoneworks are refilled with

inappropriate materials such as limestone plaster causing an incompatible appearance with the past. Also that building was divided into two irrelevant functioned structures. One part has a cultural based function but the other part has a trade-based function. Over all, the historical importance of this structure was not seen as a valuable thing. Some ill-assorted implementations such as filling some specialized zones in The Bath, putting some dis-harmonious objects in order to prevent entry to some parts of The Bath, are showing us that the supervision of the project process is not going well and right.

3. The Followed Path in Implementations of Conservation Plans in Tire

The implementation plans were designed, thought and conducted with an awareness of the historical context of the conservation area in Tire. The reports are planned and documented with that awareness and they are detailed (Güney, 2007). All details were thought and planned separately and special for different building types and different functionalized buildings. The urban furniture and lightings in streets were also planned and drawn in the design guide of Tire conservation purposed development plan and plan provisions. The general implementation decisions are made with the approval of Tire Municipality Council. It may be shown like the public has a participation by delegacy on paper but it is not enough for sustainable conservation implementations.

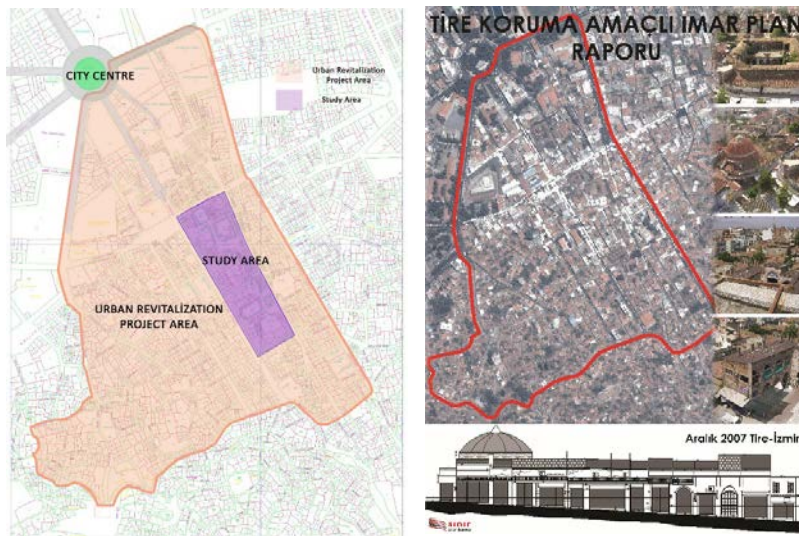


Fig.4. (a) Urban Revitalization Project Area; (b) Aerial View from Project Area in Tire. (Source: Çulcu, 2007).

After the approval of Tire Municipality Council, opinions of The Regional Council of Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage are followed and approved for any change in those historical buildings in the conservation area (Güney 2007). This is also shown as a public participation with the confirmation of these councils that are built up with delegacy but, public has not actually participated as an individual element. The main purpose of the conservation plan is; assigning functions and bringing the registered structures to life that are located in Tire Urban Sites Area. In repair of the entire structures, Science and Health Conditions Related Regulations and Charters must be confirmed. Further, the Regulations about the Structures in Disaster Areas must be followed, too (Çulcu 2007). The plan provisions are straight about the maintenance and solving disputes. For example; in case of any dispute between registered buildings and the neighbour building, Tire Municipality is not in charge, The Regional Council Conservation is. Tire Municipality is generally in charge of smaller scaled disputes. As a result, we can say that the regulations tried not to form any legal loopholes for a continuing conservation. Also rebuilding, repairing of a structure or building new structures in empty lots in Conservation Plan of Tire Urban Conservation Area, should follow the plan provisions (Güney, 2007). In the plan provisions, there are 3 main titles: 1/1000 plan provisions,

repairment and conservation states in whole planning zone, structuring states in lots and buildings and specialized buildings (Çulcu 2007). Under the structuring states, the provisions are made clearly. The conservation of the old registered buildings is protected with these provisions and also the urban texture is planned to be in a harmony with the registered building for protection of historic values. For example the facade sizes, forms, eaves heights, garden walls, rate scheme of solids and voids, elements that are going to be used in facade, stairs, doors, claddings, colours of facades, balconies, roofs, windows, chimneys, infrastructures are all planned and some of them are drawn in the Design Guide of Tire Conservation Plan.



Fig. 5. (a) Tire Urban Revitalization Project; (b) Revitalization Project Façade Layout Plans and Façade Colours. (Source: Çulcu, 2007).

4. The Importance of Public Participation for the Conservation Plan in Tire and Examination of Arnstein's Participation Ladder in that Context

Many inner historic commercial districts in Turkey are being threatened by decaying, physical degradation or destruction with the rapid urbanization (Egercioğlu and Ertan 2015). As well as this conservation project in Tire, many projects aim to develop the social and economical activities in these districts. These projects are generally concerned with preservation of the physical environment of the districts with the financial resources. However, on the other hand the sustainability should be considered as an important input for these projects for their success. Unfortunately, the sustainable position of these projects do not take the first place in that planning order due to the lack of some required main elements for that process. These are leading us to the main downside of these projects: absence of **public participation**. In that context; public participation is a simple process that make the public involve in these conservation projects as a leader or a partner to the planning process for a sustainable and valuable work. The long-term success of these kinds of projects depend on defining the problems of the existing situation and expectations from future in detail (Satherly, 2009). The participation of public who is the main user of the region, is defining the success of these outputs and make the decision process more reliable. In that context, Tire should be considered as a negative example. There are no public surveys or any participation attempts for users that provide the conservation plan and decision process for that planning. A participation model should be suggested to the authorities for success of the plans and future of the region.

If a participation model should be considered as an example, Arnstein's participation ladder could achieve the examination rapidly with a basic telling. Arnstein is offering different models about being part of decision making process. According to Horelli "...participation is a human, moral and democratic right, a duty in the new type of welfare society and a necessary resource for mastering the problems of glocalisation." Again, according to Horelli; the rising consciousness about the importance of participation can be explained in two changes in the history of

urban planning (Horelli, 2002). The first one occurred in 1960's and the second one in 1970s-1980s, the role of planner changed from an expert to a negotiator who enables stakeholders to express themselves and make planning value judgements (Arnstein, 1969). After 1990's different participation models in context of urban planning took place and increased in the academic discussions (Vural, 2014). Before this period, different models of public participation in decision making are examined by academicians such as Shelia Arnstein. She has the pioneering step in these researches about citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969). Arnstein classified different participation techniques in her "participation ladder" that explained the models well. There are 8 different levels of participation that are also collected under 3 main titles: Citizen power, tokenism, nonparticipation.

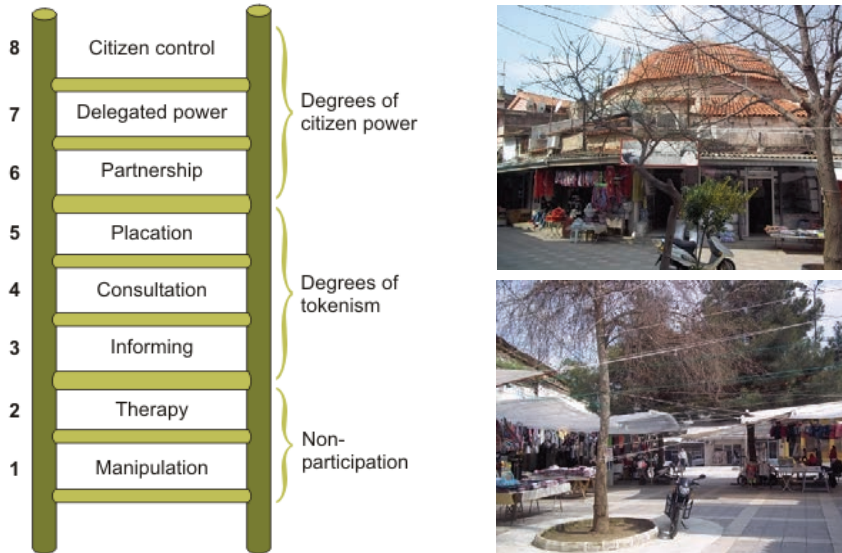


Fig. 6. (a) Arnstein's Participation Ladder; (b) View from Tire Urban Revitalization Project Area

The participation is going higher while going upwards on the ladder. The complete citizen power is defined as the highest point of the ladder and it has 3 levels beneath: Citizen control, delegated power, and partnership. Tokenism follows this while going downward in the ladder with also 3 levels: placation, consultation, and informing. The lowest point is the nonparticipation title that has 2 levels: Therapy and manipulation. Nonparticipation level describes the process that contains the process of "curing" or "educating" participants, not to make them participate in the planning and conducting process. The tokenism level describes a little higher participation process that allows the citizens to hear and be heard. But in this level, citizens also have lack of voice and power to integrate their opinions and views to the planning process. The last level, citizen power, is the highest point of the participation. Partnership method allows the negotiation and engagement between citizens and power holders. Delegated power also enables the negotiation between citizens and public officials. On the other hand; citizen control guarantees that citizens obtain the majority of decision making part or complete management power.

Meanwhile in Tire the participation level is on the "nonparticipation" level that could be explained as therapy as in Arnstein's ladder (Choguill, 1996). Citizens are not aware of what is going on with the planning process and the relationship between the power holders, citizens and government is weak. The conservation project may be going wrong because of the lack of relations. People are not informed, the opinions of the tradesmen or the regular people were not taken. The wrong functionalization and the lack of usage of facilities are the results of the chosen nonparticipation model. For example; in Bursa Covered Bazaar and Han District, many participation models are generated since 1958 (Vural, 2014). Despite the fact that participation model had begun with nonparticipation model in 1958, it evolved to "informing" in 2010, then "delegated power" in 2012 and at last it evolves to the "citizen power". After the big fire in Bursa, first revitalization project was planned by Piccinato with a local team including architects and city planners in 1953. However, there were no local user participation that formed by local retailers. This is the step representing the nonparticipation according to Arnstein's work. After this implementation, in 1988,

there is an attempt made by the academicians to be the first of its kind about participation in Bursa. Nevertheless, the “informing” step comes in 2010, a few years later. In 2010, a well known architect, “Massimiliano Fuksas”, came to work in that area with a Turkish team. Although the project was very impressive and well designed, the participation of retailers’ associations as the main users of the region was limited. The Municipality only informed them about the project.

After those processes, in 2011 UNESCO requested to evaluate the site again and the Municipality began to work about the planning projects with an aim that is including the participation of retailers’ associations. Within this aim the associations rolled as main participants, project was implemented with this idea and this step is representing the “Delegated Power” according to Arnstein’s ladder. Finally, the retailers’ associations decided to come together under one association to improve the quality of service. This process was going to lead them to “Citizen Power” in Arnstein’s participation ladder. All those improvements and evaluations helped the region’s development and improvement. When we look at this project, Tire is on the beginning of its way to lead them to participation and get better results for its conservation project. The participation ladder that Arnstein worked on should be examined thoroughly as well as the Bursa project process since 1953 that has also begun with the nonparticipation model. The improvements that Bursa gained from participation should be examined and considered as an important input for the future and sustainability of Tire conservation project. Like as Bursa example; Tire could get help from the participation tool in planning and implementation process to improve and sustain its historical value and quality.

5. Conclusion

Creating and enriching relationships between communities and local authorities through a structured engagement process can deliver innovative new planning and design options towards a sustainable future. This study exemplified a nonparticipation model of a conservation plan process of a historical commercial district in Tire, Izmir. Even the reports and reasons are well-examined, the sustainability of the project couldn’t be provided. Arnstein has been a main element developing a participation model for such areas like Tire, for nearly a half a century. Despite the various studies such as her participation ladder, her study has been still unique and inspiring. Arnstein presents the participation as a regardless power in these kinds of projects and she has already seen the empowerment in relations between the authorities and participants. Sharing knowledge and experience makes stronger planning, designing and implementation processes according to her study. Like as Arnstein; participation of regular people or users of the regions that the conservation plans are made for, must be considered as a keystone in the processes.

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